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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

JONES, DAVID

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2622

DATE MAILED: 06/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/680,727

Applicant(s)

TANIMOTO, YOSHIFUMI

Examiner

David L Jones

Art Unit

2622

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5.6.7.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 5/2/2002 was filed after the mailing date of the application on 10/5/2000. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.
3. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 2/9/2004 was filed after the mailing date of the application on 10/05/2000. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.
4. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 2/17/2004 was filed after the mailing date of the application on 10/5/2000. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Regarding claims 17 and 20, the phrase "such as" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1-2, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sadr-Salek (US 6,417,934).

Regarding claim 1, Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system comprising:

a plurality of facsimile servers (fig. 1, #10A, B, C);

a plurality of clients (fig. 3, subscriber #1, #2, #7) connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network (LAN 14); and

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a supervising server (DMS 12)(column 4, lines 1-43) connected to the communication network such that the plurality of facsimile server and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server . Sadr-Salek teaches that the DMS software is responsible for maintaining a fax document database of all the broadcast documents required by the subscribers (clients).

Regarding claim 2, Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system, wherein when the supervising server receives data from one of the clients together with an instruction of facsimile transmission and an indication of a recipient, it selects a proper facsimile server sends the data to the selected facsimile server and instructs the selected facsimile server to send the data to the indicated recipient. Sadr-Salek teaches that the DMS 12 upon receipt of a request to send a document request a FS to send the document.

Regarding claim 5, Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system comprising:

a plurality of facsimile servers (fig. 1, #10A, B, C);

a plurality of clients (fig. 3, subscriber #1, #2, #7) connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network (LAN 14); and

a supervising server (column 4, lines 1-43) connected to the communication network such that the plurality of facsimile server and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server . Sadr-Salek teaches that the DMS software is responsible for maintaining a fax document database of all the broadcast documents required by the subscribers (clients). Sadr-Salek teaches that DMS 12 designates each of the network lines on each of the FS to be incoming for broadcast mode or out going for fax-on-demand mode, fax, store and forward mode or voicemail mode.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 3-4, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sadr-Salek and further in view of Marshall (US 6,396,597).

Regarding claims 3 and 4, Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system that holds the incoming facsimile transmissions for clients in the memory of the server.

Whereas, Marshall teaches (column 6, lines 29-38) that the central server upon receiving facsimile documents they are stored in a file for each individual client, the client is then sent an email notifying them of new fax, the client then opens the file and reads the facsimile document.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the ability of Marshall to notify the individual of a new fax document within the server of Sadr-Salek.

The motivation/suggestion for doing so would have been to provide the user with up to date information that a new email has come in.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Marshall with Sadr-Salek to obtain the invention as specified in claims 3 and 4.

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Regarding claim 24, Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system comprising:

a plurality of facsimile servers (fig. 1, #10A, B, C);

a plurality of clients (fig. 3, subscriber #1, #2, #7) connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network (LAN 14); and
a supervising server (column 4, lines 1-43) connected to the communication network such that the plurality of facsimile server and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server .

Whereas, Marshall teaches (column 6, lines 29-38) that the central server upon receiving facsimile documents they are stored in a file for each individual client, the client is then sent an email notifying them of new fax, the client then opens the file and reads the facsimile document.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the ability of Marshall to notify the individual of a new fax document within the server of Sadr-Salek.

The motivation/suggestion for doing so would have been to provide the user with up to date information that a new email has come in.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Marshall with Sadr-Salek to obtain the invention as specified in claim 24.

11. Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sadr-Salek as applied to claims 1-2, and 5 above, and further in view of Tsukamoto et al. (US 5,857,073).

Regarding claim 6, Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system.

Whereas, Tsukamoto teaches (column 4, lines 31-45) that facsimile server 118 may notify a manager of the updated information or other terminals of the data via LAN 119.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the ability to notify a user of updated registered data of Tsukamoto with the system of Sadr-Salek.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to maintain data integrity between facsimiles and to give a manager or user an alarm notice when a conflict occurs.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Sadr-Salek with Tsukamoto to obtain the invention as specified in claims 6.

Regarding claims 7 and 8, Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system.

Whereas, Tsukamoto teaches (column 4, lines 31-45) that when a client wants to make a change of registration data of the facsimile fig 1, #120 is notified from the facsimile server #118 to the facsimile 121 and 122 or vice versa.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the ability to register updated data of Tsukamoto with the system of Sadr-Salek.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to maintain data integrity between facsimiles and to give a manager or user an alarm notice when a conflict occurs.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Sadr-Salek with Tsukamoto to obtain the invention as specified in claims 7 and 8.

12. Claims 9-12, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sadr-Salek.

Regarding claim 9, Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system comprising:

a plurality of facsimile servers (fig. 1, #10A, B, C);

a plurality of clients (fig. 3, subscriber #1, #2, #7) connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network (LAN 14); and

a supervising server (column 4, lines 1-43) connected to the communication network such that the plurality of facsimile server and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server .

Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 40-43) that the managing software maintains and updates subscriber information, and maintains, verifies, and changes ID and PIN numbers, but does not explicitly detail that an administrator from one or more of the clients to administer setting information. Further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that an administrator would have access to change the setting information within the system from anyone of the clients.

Regarding claim 10, Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 40-43) that the managing software maintains and updates subscriber information, and maintains, verifies, and changes ID and PIN numbers, but does not explicitly detail that an administrator from one or more of the clients to administer setting information. Further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that an administrator would have access to change the setting information within the system from anyone of the clients. And it is well known in the art that an administrator can authorize each client with different authorities depending on their individual needs.

Regarding claim 11, Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system comprising:

- a plurality of facsimile servers (fig. 1, #10A, B, C);
- a plurality of clients (fig. 3, subscriber #1, #2, #7) connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network (LAN 14); and
- a supervising server (column 4, lines 1-43) connected to the communication network such that the plurality of facsimile server and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server .

Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 40-43) that the managing software maintains and updates subscriber information, and maintains, verifies, and changes ID and PIN numbers, but does not explicitly detail that an administrator from one or more of the clients to administer setting information. Further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that an administrator would have access to change the setting information within the system from anyone of the clients.

Regarding claim 12, Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 40-43) that the managing software maintains and updates subscriber information, and maintains, verifies, and changes ID and PIN numbers, but does not explicitly detail that an administrator from one or more of the clients to administer setting information. Further, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that an administrator would have access to change the setting information within the system from anyone of the clients. And it is well known in the art that an administrator can authorize each client with different authorities or competences depending on their individual needs within the system.

Regarding claim 23, Sadr-Salek teaches (column 4, lines 1-43) a network facsimile system comprising:

a plurality of facsimile servers (fig. 1, #10A, B, C);

a plurality of clients (fig. 3, subscriber #1, #2, #7) connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network (LAN 14); and

a supervising server (column 4, lines 1-43) connected to the communication network such that the plurality of facsimile server and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server .

Sadr-Salek discloses (column 4, lines 1-43) wherein when the supervising server receives data from one of the clients together with an instruction of facsimile transmission and an indication of a recipient, it selects a proper facsimile server sends the data to the selected facsimile server and instructs the selected facsimile server to send the data to the indicated recipient. Sadr-Salek teaches that the DMS 12 upon receipt of a request to send a document request a FS to send the document.

Allowable Subject Matter

13. Claims 17 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.
14. Claims 13-16 are allowed.
15. Claims 18-19 and 21-22 objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
16. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Prior art does not teach a plurality of facsimile server and a plurality of clients connected to the plurality of facsimile servers over a communication network; and a supervising server connected to the communication network that the plurality of facsimile servers and clients communicate with each other via the supervising server; *and a memory associated with the supervising server for dividing and storing the plurality of facsimile servers and clients into a plurality of groupings.*

Conclusion

17. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Pavey et al. (US 5,530,907) discloses a modularly configured networked document processing system has a plurality of computers communicating over a local area network.


Harris, Jr. et al. (US 6,144,975) discloses a computer system includes several inputs for receiving documents being transmitted via different media, and several outputs for transmitting outgoing documents via different media.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David L Jones whose telephone number is (703) 305-4675. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (7:00am - 3:30pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Coles can be reached on (703) 305-4712. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

David L. Jones



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